

Falls of the James Scenic River Advisory Committee

Approved Minutes for January 8, 2004

Attendees:

Committee Members:

Chairman Ralph Hambrick, Vice Chairman Sue Cecil, Lynn Newcomb, John Pearsall, Greg Velzy and Jonathan Young.

Others:

Ralph White (James River Parks).

The Committee reviewed and unanimously approved the minutes from the previous meeting.

The Committee engaged in a discussion pertaining to the proposed whitewater takeout. Ralph Hambrick and Greg Velzy reported that the City's Parks and Recreation and Economic Development departments are supportive of the proposal. The takeout proposal is contingent on the land swap with Norfolk Southern. Parks and Recreation has advised that there is currently no funding for the proposal. Ralph White recommended utilization of volunteers in order to minimize costs. Further, White recommended that the Falls Committee engage the public in order to generate momentum.

The Committee addressed the publication and distribution of a riparian owner best practices instructional materials. Velzy reported that he had engaged in discussions with the James River Association regarding said instructional materials. John Pearsall suggested that the instructional materials should include specific references to statutory prohibitions pertaining to riparian owners. Velzy made the motion to proceed with the publication and distribution of instructional materials. Jonathan Young objected to the inclusion of any references to statutes or ordinances that preclude private property owners from managing their lands in what they consider the most appropriate manner. Further, Young contended that any existing problems didn't warrant the motion. Pearsall disagreed contending that he anticipated further problems should the situation not be addressed. Hambrick recommended the adoption of a drafting committee including Hambrick, Velzy and Young that could address content concerns. The vote was called and passed 5-1 with Young voting in opposition.

The Committee again discussed signage and agreed to continue discussions with the River City Alliance.

Ralph White informed the Committee that a Fish Festival was tentatively scheduled for the first Saturday in May on the Mayo Bridge. Young inquired about the location of the Festival and the decision to select Mayo Bridge over Belle Isle.

The Committee discussed the separation in the upper arch and Ralph White informed the Committee that he has developed a plan though he needs further professional instruction. Sue Cecil volunteered to consult said professional instruction.

Additional topics of discussion included the proposed amendments to the City's Master Plan, parking along the river and a river information clearinghouse. Ralph White informed the Committee that the signs alongside Riverside Drive have been deemed to be in violation of federal transportation rules and will more than likely be ordered removed. Pearsall made the motion to support White's position and argue that Riverside Drive is an extraordinary road and should be exempt from the rules. Lyn Newcomb cautioned the Committee in regards to taking such a position. After agreeing to provide Newcomb with an opportunity to review and to approve the language in any letter, the Committee unanimously voted in support of the motion.

The Committee adjourned at 2:00.